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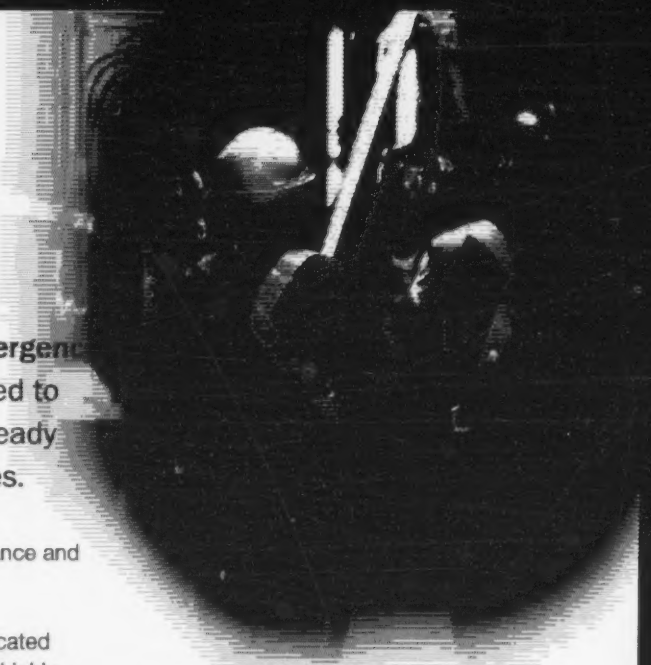
WaterLine

A publication about Ontario's water and wastewater industry.

TO THE RESCUE



With luck your municipality will never need **OCWA's Emergency Response Teams.** Just the same, you might be comforted to know that 24 hours a day, seven days a week, they're ready for rapid response to water and wastewater emergencies.

No municipality ever wants to experience problems with its drinking water. However, situations such as severe weather conditions, prolonged power outages, facility breakdowns, etc. can occur, leading to boil water advisories and possible threats to public health.

Ontario's municipal officials may sleep more soundly, however, knowing that the province is one of the only jurisdictions in the world with teams of experienced, highly-trained and well-equipped drinking water and wastewater experts who are ready to respond when alerted of an emergency by the Ministry of the Environment.

In the wake of the Walkerton Inquiry and the introduction of the *Safe Drinking Water Act*, OCWA (in partnership with the Ministry of the Environment), established five OCWA Emergency Response Teams (OERT) to deal with future water and wastewater emergencies.

"These OERT teams have been specially trained and equipped to respond to water and wastewater emergencies anywhere in the province and resolve the problems in a timely and expert manner," says Yarlene Frisani, Director, Risk, Compliance and Training for OCWA.

The five teams, strategically located throughout Ontario, consist of highly-trained OCWA operators with a range of complementary specialties required in an emergency (e.g. treatment, distribution, lab skills, certification, etc.). In addition to their unique skill sets, each OERT team is bolstered by a rapid-deployment mobile trailer containing specialized equipment to tackle most water-related emergencies.

The team members also participate in extensive training and testing each year to help keep their skills honed and their procedures up-to-date with the latest regulations and technological developments.

The OERT teams have played key roles in remediating water-related problems in a number of Ontario communities, including a prolonged boil water order in Foleyet, water quality challenges in Constance Lake First Nation, the collapse of a wastewater treatment facility in Kirkland Lake and more.

"Our teams are ready to go on a moment's notice if needed in a

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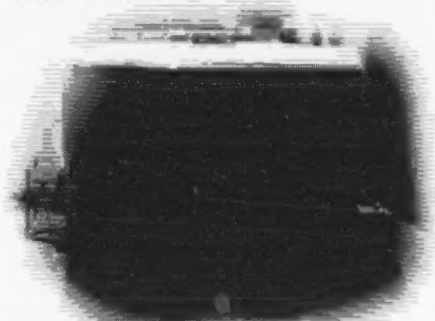

community. Depending on the scope of the situation, we can bring multiple teams if necessary," says Tony Janssen, OCWA's OERT team lead in Northeastern Ontario. "We have the equipment, the people and

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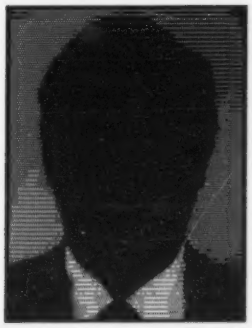


A Message from
Dan Atkinson, Vice President Operations,
Southern Ontario, OCWA

OCWA's Emergency Services help protect safety of Ontario's drinking water

Nine years ago, the Town of Walkerton was still reeling from the aftermath of its infamous E. coli water contamination crisis – a tragedy that changed the face of drinking water safety in Ontario.

As a result of the crisis (and the recommendations of the Walkerton Inquiry), Ontario is one of the best-equipped and prepared jurisdictions in the world when it comes to drinking water safety. Case in point: The Drinking Water Quality Management Standard (DWQMS). This standard, a key recommendation of the Walkerton Inquiry, is one of the world's most rigorous quality management systems for operating authorities of drinking water facilities.

Despite these comprehensive standards, however, municipalities and operating authorities can never be too vigilant in protecting public health. OCWA, which played a key role in remediating the water system in Walkerton nine years ago, continues to introduce new initiatives aimed at protecting the safety of Ontario's drinking water supply.

OCWA... continues to introduce new programs and initiatives aimed at protecting the safety and integrity of Ontario's drinking water supply.

In this issue of Waterline, you'll read about some of these initiatives, including OCWA's Emergency Response Teams (OERT), the subject of our cover story. Along with the Ministry of the Environment, OCWA established these five teams to deal with water and wastewater emergencies. These teams consist of highly-skilled personnel with specialized, mobile equipment. They're on call 24 hours a day and have come to the rescue in a number of challenging situations throughout Ontario.

You'll also read about the 'First Nations Technical Support and First Response Program' – a telephone hotline that lets First Nations communities contact OCWA when they need assistance, advice or emergency support with their local water operations.

These are just two examples of the types of emergency services OCWA makes available to Ontario communities. It's part of our continuing commitment to ensuring the safety and security of drinking water throughout the province.

Emergency hotline provides First Nation communities with added peace of mind

In June of 2007, the community of Pikangikum First Nation found itself faced with a drinking water emergency. A fire at a local school had burned so intensely that it melted the underground water pipes, cutting off the drinking water supply to the community, which is located about 100 kilometres northwest of Red Lake.

Thankfully, help was just a phone call away.

Pikangikum First Nation was able to call in OCWA via a 24-hour hotline established in early 2007. The hotline was created for First Nation water treatment operators anywhere in Ontario who required assistance or advice about their local water operations. Officially called the 'First Nations Technical Support and First Response Program', the hotline was established to provide First Nation communities in Ontario with round the clock access to OCWA's operational expertise, advice and, if needed, emergency response services.

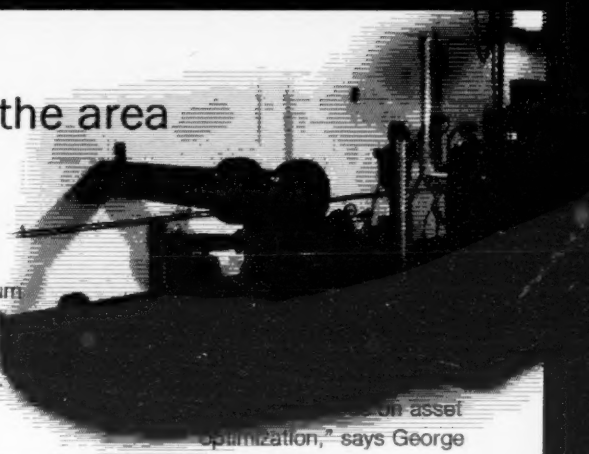
"The concept behind the program was essentially to provide these communities with an added layer of expertise and assurance with respect to their water operations. It's not unlike an insurance policy – you hope you won't need it, but if the need arises, it's reassuring to know it's there," says Dan Dunn, Manager, First Nations and Industrial with OCWA. "The program has proven to be a very effective tool since its inception and we've received very positive feedback thus far."

The hotline has come in handy in several urgent situations, including the situation in Pikangikum First Nation. In that instance, OCWA immediately dispatched one of its Emergency Response Teams to remediate the situation and restore safe, clean water to the community.

Calls to the hotline aren't always urgent in nature, however. On occasion, an operator might be looking for a second expert opinion on topics such as chemical dosages, supplier recommendations, etc.

"In that respect, the hotline is similar to the 'OnStar' button in GM vehicles," says Dunn. "Whether the community is dealing with an emergency situation, or if they simply need input or advice on water treatment issues, they can make the call and be connected with our experts instantly."

Canadian organization raising the bar in the area of engineering asset management



A Canadian-based consortium is spearheading an ambitious effort to advance asset management practices around the world. The Centre for Maintenance, Optimization and Reliability Engineering (C-MORE) is the world's premiere research and development body for engineering asset management and has a long list of members including players such as Barrick Gold, Hydro One, Xerox, the UK Ministry of Defence and more.

C-MORE's ultimate objective is to use research to enable real-world asset management benefits in a wide range of industries. "Our work is about bringing evidence-based decision-making to asset management," says Professor Andrew Jardine, Director of C-MORE, which is based at the University of Toronto. "Industry is our laboratory. Our consortium members provide us with the ideas and challenges that drive our research, and they benefit from the resulting advances."

In addition to accessing C-MORE's technology and insights around everything from condition-based maintenance to spares management, consortium members also help guide future research. Professor Jardine calls it a very successful industry/university partnership.

The Ontario Clean Water Agency is one of the consortium's newest members. "OCWA is known for having a strong [illegible] asset optimization," says George Terry, VP of Northern Operations and First Nations. "We chose to work with C-MORE because of their dedication to this important area and to participate in finding new ways to help maintain capacity and extend the useful life of our clients' infrastructure, helping them get the most out of their capital investments." **For more information, visit cmore.mie.utoronto.ca.**

RESCUE *continued from page 1 ...*

the expertise to start making a difference immediately. The portable nature of our teams and the skills of our people means we can make the water safe to drink quickly."

"OERT members may be the most highly-trained water emergency professionals in the province," says Dr. Larry Moore, OCWA's Emergency Advisor, who's directly involved with the intensive training and activities of the OERT teams. "In addition, they bring their experience and specialized training to the OCWA systems they operate, ensuring the highest standards of preparedness and efficiency."

For additional information on OCWA's Emergency Response Teams, please contact Dr. Larry Moore or Yarlene Frisani at 1-800-667-6292.

Ontario municipalities brace for H1N1

The lessons learned from 2003's SARS outbreak prompted the Province to require that all municipalities create Pandemic Plans as a component of their overall emergency preparedness. This year, those plans are being put to the test as Ontario braces for a second wave of the virulent influenza strain, H1N1.

"The risk for municipalities is real," says Nick Benkovich, Director of Water and Wastewater Services for the City of Greater Sudbury. "From critical staff shortages to disruptions of essential services like suppliers and labs. We have several layers of plan in place to ensure we continue to operate effectively."

Those plans include indentifying backups for key staff, stockpiling emergency equipment such as gloves and masks, and having larger supplies of water treatment chemicals on hand. The most important step, says Benkovich, is communicating with staff.

"We're reminding our people to get vaccinated, that they shouldn't come to work when they're sick, and that they're ensuring cleanliness in the workplace, from increased hand-washing to disinfecting operating surfaces."

Emergency planning in smaller cities is a corporate function, explains Richard Reinert, Manager of Environmental Services for the city of Belleville.

"Senior Managers across Belleville's operations have worked together to prepare a Business Continuity Plan to cover H1N1's possible impact on staffing, coordinating with the local Health Unit and Medical Officer of Health. Water Treatment and Distribution systems are covered by that overall plan."

Like Ontario's municipalities, OCWA is also doing everything it can to prepare for H1N1, says Emergency Management Program Coordinator Chris Wolnik. "Pandemic planning is a key component of our overall emergency preparedness, and our Action Team has been working since April in anticipation of this issue."

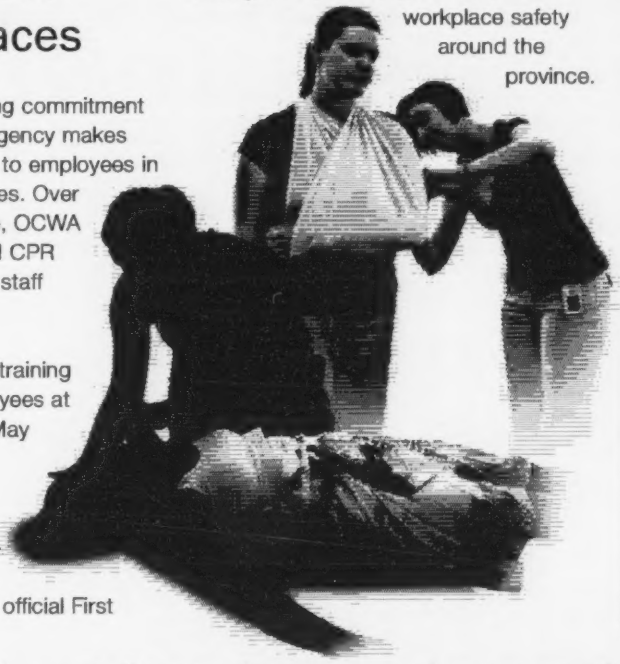
Wolnik agrees that individuals have an important role to play in getting through H1N1. "Taking steps to prevent the spread of the flu is something we can all do."

OCWA **first aid training** supports commitment to safe workplaces

As part of OCWA's ongoing commitment to safe workplaces, the Agency makes First Aid training available to employees in all of its offices and facilities. Over the past three years alone, OCWA has provided First Aid and CPR training to more than 300 staff members.

"The most recent first aid training we held was for 18 employees at our Toronto office in late May 2009," said Jodi Travers, Senior Labour Relations Consultant with OCWA. "Upon successful completion of the training, these individuals are certified as official First Aid attendants, able to assist with a wide range of emergencies."

This recent session is just the latest example of OCWA's commitment to workplace safety around the province.



Similar courses are held in all OCWA-operated water and wastewater facilities throughout Ontario to ensure that first aid attendants maintain valid certification status, are up-to-date on new first aid techniques, etc. Staff at operational facilities must take First Aid and CPR if they are required to act as a rescue person for work in a confined space.

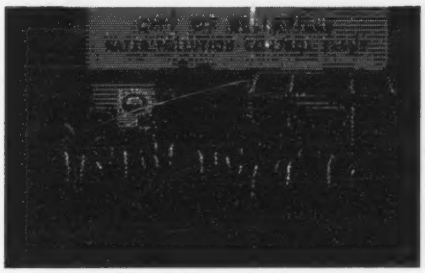
"Health and safety is a top priority for us and this program is another way we can help safeguard our employees throughout Ontario," said Kim Wallace, Occupational Health and Safety Coordinator.

SAFETY FIRST

- First Aid Kits are maintained in all OCWA vehicles
- These kits are inspected monthly by certified First Aid personnel
- Approximately 100 OCWA employees are trained in First Aid and CPR each year

Safety award recipients honoured at special dinner

The Ontario Clean Water Agency held a special dinner on Tuesday, September 22nd, 2009 at the Holiday Inn Yorkdale in Toronto to honour recipients of the Agency's 2008 Safety Awards.



Top: Terry Truant, Mechanic/Operator in OCWA's Essex East Hub with Dale Dillen (background) the OCWA Senior Operator/Mechanic who nominated him. Bottom: Members of the Trent Valley Hub in Eastern Ontario who became the first hub within OCWA to implement the Agency's new Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Policy.

The OCWA Safety awards recognize individuals and teams who go beyond regular requirements to develop or implement new ways to enhance health and safety within the Agency and who actively promote a positive safety culture. There were two Safety awards presented at the ceremony:

Individual, *Terry Truant, Union Water Treatment Plant*
Terry is a maintenance mechanic at the Union Water Treatment Plant. He designed and installed a clarifier blanket, lighting unit to facilitate safe and time-efficient bulb replacement. This initiative eliminated the need to equip the individual changing the bulb with fall arrest equipment, improved operating efficiencies and, as a result, reduced costs.

Team, *Trent Valley Hub, Eastern Region*
The Trent Valley Hub became the first hub within OCWA to implement the Agency's recently revised Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Policy. Charged with conducting the initial pilot, Trent Valley Hub staff quickly became familiar with the challenges of changing behaviors related to personal safety and equally quickly overcame those challenges to take a leadership role in the implementation of the new program.

Award recipients were introduced by their peers – the individuals who nominated them. OCWA is proud to count these exemplary individuals as part of our team and congratulates all recipients on their outstanding achievement.

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